The stay of an emigrant in the host country becomes illegal either due to irregular entry or due to overstay of a visit visa, the work permit or the residence permit.

The Government has taken steps with a view to prevent Indian emigrants from becoming illegal emigrants and to mitigate the difficulties of those rendered illegal.

Besides awareness campaigns amongst intending emigrants about legal emigration procedures, risk of illegal migration and precautions to be taken during emigration, the Government has also established an Overseas Worker Resource Centre (OWRC) to provide need based authentic information to the intending emigrants on all aspects of emigration including the credentials of recruiting agents.

The Government has signed MoUs with the major receiving countries to lay down the framework for bilateral cooperation for protection and welfare of workers. Joint Working Groups have been constituted to find practical bilateral solutions to labour related problems. The Government has established Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in all ECR countries to provide onsite support to the affected emigrants. The Indian missions provide all necessary assistance for the return of illegal emigrants.

Criteria for BPL

†*183. DR. RAM PRAKASH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria for declaring a family below the poverty line;

(b) the time when these criteria were fixed; and

(c) whether all State Governments practically observe these criteria?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Rural Development in association with the State Governments and UTs conducts the BPL Census to identify the rural households living Below the Poverty Line who could be assisted under its various programmes. The BPL Census is generally conducted at the beginning of a Five Year Plan. The last BPL Census was conducted in 2002 based on the methodology of Score Based Ranking of rural households for which 13 socio-economic parameters were used. These were: land holdings; type of house; availability of clothing; food security; sanitation; ownership of consumer durables; ilteracy status; status of household labour; means of livelihood; status of children; type of indebtedness; reason for migration; and preference for assistance.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Claim over potential sea bed

*184. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

---

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.